

22. (New) The operation and display section according to Claim 16, wherein the means for controlling input processing includes means for setting document reading conditions.

23. (New) The operation and display section according to Claim 16, wherein the means for controlling output processing includes means for selecting at least one of a sort mode, a stack mode, a staple mode, and a punch mode.

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24. (New) The operation and display section according to Claim 16, wherein the means for controlling input processing, the means for controlling copy processing, and the means for controlling output processing are horizontally arranged side by side on the touch screen panel in input processing, copy processing, output processing order.

25. (New) The operation and display section according to Claim 16, wherein the means for controlling copy processing has a greater area than each of the means for controlling input processing and the means for controlling output processing.

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in view of the following comments and as presently amended is respectfully requested.

Claims 11-25 are presently pending in the application. Claims 1-10 have been canceled and Claims 11-25 have been added by way of the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, the title was indicated as not descriptive; Claims 1-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the

invention; and Claims 1-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Wilson et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,467,170).

In response to the indication of the title as not descriptive, the title has been amended.

Claims 1-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention; and Claims 1-10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Wilson et al. Claims 1-10 have been canceled. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that above-discussed rejections should be withdrawn.

Claims 11-25 have been added to clarify the invention and to provide claims meeting the standard format of apparatus and method claims, as indicated in the Official Action.¹ Support for the new claims is provided at least at page 6, line 14, to page 11, line 10, and shown at least in Figures 2-11 of the specification. Therefore, the amendment is not believed to raise a question of new matter.

Applicants have noted problems with touch panel schemes for image forming apparatus such as copiers, printers, and facsimiles. In particular, when an operator wants to change a setting of an image forming apparatus using a touch panel scheme, the operator often must step through various touch panel screen displays until the desired setting appears. As a result, the operator may no longer view settings on other touch panel screen displays that have been previously made which makes operation of the image forming apparatus troublesome.²

¹Official Action at page 2, paragraph 3, lines 3-6.

²Specification at page 3, lines 8-13.

Applicants' invention provides an operation unit capable of arranging touch panel functions hierarchically for easier understanding and operation.³ In particular, the claimed invention provides "a program key," as recited in new independent Claim 11 that allows the operator to register (i.e., program for display) desired image forming function tabs for display on the touch panel. In addition, the claimed invention, as recited in new independent Claims 12 and 14, provides a method for operating the operation and display section:

wherein at least the input document handling area, the operation status message area, the document counting area, the output document handling area, and the programmable registered image forming function tab area are maintained on the touch panel screen.

That is, the claimed invention provides easier understanding and operation of an operation and display section over conventional touch panel schemes at least by (1) providing for the programming and display of only a desired set of image forming functions in the programmable registered image forming function tab area, and by (2) maintaining and displaying areas containing previously made settings on the touch panel display.

Turning to the applied art, Wilson et al discloses a reproduction apparatus that includes an operator control panel (OCP) having a display screen for indicating selectable features for producing a copy and plural displayed options for each feature.⁴ In particular, Wilson et al discloses the OCP includes a copies numerical display (CND) that indicates the number of copies requested, a job setup display (JSUD) with buttons and prompting displays, a logic and control unit (LCU) of the reproduction apparatus 1 to facilitate setting up a

³*Id.* at page 3, lines 16-21.

⁴Wilson et al at Abstract.

copying job, a start key, a stop key, and an interrupt key.⁵ Moreover, Wilson et al discloses the JSUD includes a “standard feature display” with functions typically used for an average reproduction job that are selected by a series of up/down button sets B1-B8 located below the JSUD display.⁶

However, Wilson et al nowhere discloses or suggests “a program key” nor a “copy server key” as recited in Claim 11. In particular, in contrast to the claimed invention, Wilson et al nowhere discloses or suggests providing the operator with a keyboard input that allows selection of desired image forming function tabs for copying operations and display.

Further, Wilson et al nowhere discloses or suggests, as recited in Claims 12 and 14:

wherein at least the input document handling area, *the operation status message area*, the document counting area, the output document handling area, and *the programmable registered image forming function tab area* are maintained on the touch panel screen. [Emphasis added.]

In particular, in contrast to the claimed invention, Wilson et al nowhere discloses or suggests a method of operating the OCP which provides an operation status message area and a programmable registered image forming function tab area.

In addition, Wilson et al nowhere discloses or suggests, as recited in Claim 16:

a first touch screen panel subsection configured to control input processing of a document;
a second touch screen panel subsection configured to control copy processing of the document; and
a third touch screen panel subsection configured to control output processing of the document;
wherein each touch screen panel subsection includes function keys that are selected to control processing in each subsection and only information displayed in touch screen

⁵*Id.* at Figure 3; column 3, lines 39-44.

⁶*Id.* at Figure 3; column 4, lines 47-65.

panel subsections that contain selected function keys changes when function keys are selected.

That is, Wilson et al, as above discussed, discloses an operator control panel (OCP) with CND and JSUD display portions, but these display portions are *not* touch screen panels, as above-recited in independent Claim 16.

Moreover, Wilson et al nowhere discloses or suggests further dividing the display portion into subsections for “input processing,” “copy processing,” and “output processing,” as above-recited in independent Claim 16. As a result, Wilson et al, as illustrated in Figures 4-12, discloses that *the entire display changes* when a function key is selected. In contrast, the claimed invention, as recited in independent Claim 16, provides that:

only information displayed in touch screen panel subsections that contain selected function keys changes when function keys are selected.

That is, the entire display changes in Wilson et al, whereas only a subsection of the display changes in the invention of independent Claim 16.

Claim 21 is a “means plus function” version of Claim 16. Thus, for the reasons above-discussed, Wilson et al does not disclose or suggest the invention of independent Claim 21.

Therefore it is respectfully submitted that Wilson et al does not disclose, anticipate, or inherently teach the limitations of the claimed invention; and thus new independent Claims 11, 12, 14, 16, and 21, and claims dependent thereon, patentably distinguish thereover.

Accordingly, in view of the present amendment and in light of the previous

discussion, it is respectfully submitted that this application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance and an early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Gregory J. Maier
Registration No. 25,599
Surinder Sachar
Registration No. 34,423
Attorneys of Record



22850

(703) 413-3000
Fax #: (703) 413-2220
GJM/SNS/MKW:kkn
I:\atty\MKW\Amend-Responses\0557\05574557.am.mod_prop.wpd

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IN THE TITLE

Please amend the existing title as follows:

--OPERATION UNIT FOR AN IMAGE FORMING APPARATUS WITH A
PROGRAMMABLE REGISTERED IMAGE FORMING FUNCTION TAB DISPLAY
AREA--

IN THE CLAIMS

Please cancel Claims 1-10 without prejudice.

Claims 11-25 (New).